

Public Involvement

Comments

E-0041/004

On more specific points, I would like to focus on page 3.243 in the comment response volume. Here answers were somewhat more complete, but they didn't particularly profit thereby, for the threadbare text of insufficient study more adequately showed its holes when more complete answers were given.

E-0047/039

We request that all citizen comments, questions and presentations at public hearings be responded to, and individuals who gave comments receive a written response. Both the question and answer sessions and alternative public interest viewpoint presentations were transcribed, and we request that they be included in the record, and responded to as comments. Where questions were not responded to accurately, or when USDOE was not able to respond to a question, USDOE should fully respond in writing.

Response

Comments received during the HSW EIS process are recorded, reviewed, and responded to in accordance with applicable NEPA regulations and DOE policies. Specific concerns have been individually considered and are addressed in Volume III, the Comment Response Document.

Comments

E-0055/007

Public Comment Stifled and Inadequate: Finally, USDOE acknowledged that its published closure date for the comment period (which was May 26, Memorial Day) is illegal under NEPA. We warned USDOE that its proposed cut off of comments on a legal holiday was an illegal attempt to cut short the comment period, by trying to require that comments had to be received by the Friday preceding the 45th day (creating a 42 day comment period on a massive document about decisions that are momentous). On April 14 USDOE announced the dates for hearings and cities, with far less than 30 days notice to the public for hearings. This precludes citizen groups from mailing a Citizens' Guide or other comment guide with any decent analysis and announcing the dates and locations of hearings. Indeed, USDOE with just two weeks before the start of hearings, USDOE had not set locations, so we could not mail them to the public even if we had analyzed the document enough to produce a more detailed guide.

Response

The published closure date for the comment period was originally May 27, 2003. This was noted in the Federal Register on April 11, 2003 (68 FR 17801).

NEPA procedures ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and before actions are taken. DOE considers public input a valuable and required step in the NEPA process. DOE solicited input from regulators, tribal nations and members of the public over a three-month comment period on the first draft HSW EIS, and over an extended sixty (60) day comment period on the revised draft HSW EIS. The HSW EIS incorporates accurate scientific analyses, expert comments from supporting agencies, and the results of public scrutiny provided during scoping and other public review periods. The resulting HSW EIS concentrates on issues that are truly significant to management of LLW, MLLW, and TRU waste at Hanford. The revised draft HSW EIS was presented for a public comment period of forty-five (45) days beginning April 11, 2003. In response to requests, the comment period was extended for an additional fifteen (15) days to June 11, 2003.

Both oral and written comments were received at public meetings. Written comments were also accepted by conventional and electronic mail. Comments were provided on several common topics including: coordination with other environmental impact statements and DOE activities; alternatives and activities to analyze; waste types and volumes to analyze; public health, environmental consequences; transportation risk, and public involvement and government agency consultation. DOE has carefully considered and made an

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extensive effort to respond to comments and incorporate revisions in the final HSW EIS. It must be noted that many of the actions evaluated will be subject to additional and more specific regulatory and public reviews pursuant to the dangerous waste permitting process and the TPA.

DOE believes this HSW EIS complies with applicable NEPA requirements. See Volume I Sections 1.6 and 7, Volume II Appendices A and I, and the Volume III CRD introductory sections for further details on consultation and public involvement.

Comments

E-0021/003

I am especially disturbed with the short comment period. The draft is far too large to digest and comment on in the short time allowed. Why not extend the comment period so that it can be properly analyzed?

E-0026/001

The NEPA requires adequate time for the public to read AND assimilate the information written in any EIS. Your job is to provide adequate time for the public and agencies to read and respond to specifics within the document. Thirty days is NOT adequate for a 3000 page document.

E-0041/001

While the extension of the comment period was anything but adequate for anybody without a large staff to read and interpret this massive document, it did give me time to finish reading the 'responses' to my comment:

E-0043/004, EM-0217/004, EM-0218/004, L-0056/004, LM-0017/004, LM-0018/004

The HSW EIS is not compliant with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and fails to address adequately the following legally mandated compliance issues.

E-0043/036, EM-0217/036, EM-0218/036, L-0056/036, LM-0017/036, LM-0018/036

DOE's consultation with Tribes and other state and federal agencies has been inadequate, as has DOE's consultation with the general public.

E-0044/001

The EIS as written is unusable for decision making.

E-0047/001

While we [Columbia Riverkeepers] appreciate that the Department of Energy (DOE) took the effort to revise its initial draft, the current draft still falls far short of the requirements under both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and fails to cure many of the deficiencies identified by numerous reviewers including the EPA. The serious inadequacies require that DOE re-issue a new Draft EIS that fully meets the requirements of NEPA and SEPA.

E-0047/037

NEPA requires adequate time for the public to read and assimilate the information in an Environmental Impact Statement. Although at the last moment USDOE granted an extension two days after the Hood River public meeting, USDOE did not allow sufficient public or even other agencies time to do the proper evaluation. CRK [Columbia Riverkeepers] believes because of this failure this EIS does not comply with the intent of NEPA.

E-0047/038

Given the massive environmental contamination that has already exists at Hanford and proposals that would ship even more radioactive and mixed waste to Hanford, the need for this type of disclosure is especially great

E-0050/001

Although the Department of Energy (DOE) addressed many of my concerns about shortcomings in the original EIS, there are many problems remaining in the current version, and it fails to meet National

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Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.

E-0050/004

Although the 15-day extension for submitting these comments is appreciated, it is still inadequate for reviewing a document of the length and complexity of the HSW EIS. Additional time is needed to comply with NEPA's requirement that adequate time be provided for the public to read and assimilate the information.

E-0055/008

The U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE) responded to the outpouring of criticism of its first draft of the Hanford Solid Waste Environmental Impact Statement (HSWEIS), issued in 2002, by acknowledging that it was not legally adequate and withdrawing the draft. This new draft is still incomplete and inadequate to support any of the proposed decisions.

USDOE failed to provide adequate opportunity for public review and notice to the public of the proposals and content of this draft. The comment period was marred by repeated failures of USDOE to live up to reasonable notice and review expectations, including legal minimum standards.

The intent of USDOE has been repeatedly stated in public forums to issue Records of Decision (RODs) on the proposals made in this EIS to increase waste shipments to Hanford by July 31, 2003. This predetermination, was in, and of, itself, illegal. It revealed that USDOE had already decided to make Hanford a national radioactive waste dump for Low-Level Radioactive Wastes (LLW), Mixed Low-Level Radioactive and Hazardous Wastes (Mixed Wastes), and Transuranic Wastes (TRU, including Mixed and extremely radioactive "Remote Handled TRU"). Indeed, USDOE representatives and notice mailings stated that USDOE had already decided to use Hanford's soil to dispose or "store" of these wastes from other nuclear weapons production and research facilities regardless of the specific and cumulative impacts on the ground water, public safety, long-term human health, the Columbia River and the environment.

These statements made a sham out of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and were specifically designed to discourage public comment on the fundamental issues, and the fundamental impacts of USDOE's proposed actions. There is no doubt that the statements in USDOE's notice, at hearings and at public meetings discouraged public comment on what the proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to them. For this reason, amongst scores of other reasons, the EIS is legally inadequate for either NEPA or State Environmental Policy Act (RCW Chapter 43.21C) purposes.

E-0055/009

It [the draft EIS] was not prepared in compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes. For the reasons detailed below, we advise DOE to withdraw the EIS, and to reconfigure the entire Hanford EIS process. The Board advises the regulatory agencies to find the document inadequate to meet NEPA and the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requirements.

F-0008/002

If they [Columbia Riverkeepers] need more time to analyze, it MUST be provided.

F-0010/003

Due to the complexity and seriousness of the topic at hand, I have also joined my colleagues in requesting a 15-day extension of the comment period. It is absolutely critical that the public has sufficient time to consider the important decisions associated with the actions in this document.

F-0013/005

The revised EIS should be rejected. It is not what was intended by the NEPA and even fails to meet the most technical of requirements.

F-0018/001

45 days to review a 3000 page document - c'mon

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F-0019/001

The lack of effort by the DOE to involved public interest is a joke. 45 days to review a 3000 page report? Even the experts have requested a 30-day extension - I request that DOE extend the deadline for comment an additional 30-days.

F-0021/006

...rushing the EIS process to avoid public scrutiny is not OK and is a sign of your bad faith.

F-0024/003

Extend the public comment period on this EIS to allow necessary public participation.

F-0025/003

This solid waste EIS is an inadequate study.

F-0025/007

Since NEPA states there be adequate time to review and comment, USD OE should have allowed a comment period extension. With this declined, the process is unacceptable.

F-0026/001, F-0028/001

Input from the public is essential and needs to take place over the period, of a year or more, in order for voices, pro and con, to be heard.

F-0026/004, F-0028/004

An extension is necessary to properly prepare for cleanup of Hanford without adding additional waste.

F-0027/003

Please withdraw this EIS and come back with one that's best for everyone and our earth.

F-0029/004

So legally and morally a new EIS is needed.

F-0031/001

Public awareness is key in resolving the Hanford crisis. Our lives in the Northwest are at stake as long as the D.O.E. does little or nothing to clean up the mess. The damage has already been done - it is irreparable and the results disastrous.

L-0011/001

I find your efforts to inform the public about the RDEIS for the Hanford Solid Waste Program severely lacking. Although I may have missed it in my evening peruse through the Walla Walla Union Bulletin, I have seen no news release or information about the opportunity for public comment here in the Walla Walla area and only heard about the public comment period through other sources.

In addition, a mere 45-day comment period barely gives people enough time to read, let alone digest a 3,000 page bureaucratic document! ... I would strongly encourage you to extend your comment period for at least another 90 days and make additional efforts to inform the public of this opportunity.

The fact that you are holding only six public meetings across the region is also disturbing. It appears that you have tried to cover the travel ways in your choice of locations, but the population base you need to be reaching cannot be served in six meetings at scattered locations. Your proposal affects a wide-ranging rural population and if you have not considered additional public meetings so many people in the out-lying areas can attend without having to travel hundreds of miles you need to do so. I believe your public involvement plan may meet minimum NEPA requirements but probably does not meet the requirements for Executive Order 12898 for Environmental Justice. As an agency you must show more responsibility in this effort, you manage a federal facility that has the capability to bring great harm to a large population. They need to be

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well informed.

L-0016/001

The comment period is too short! The original document was too long to be read and critiqued in the time allowed: this revised document is more than three times as long. Page #s have changed, new charts and figures have been added; yet there is even less time granted to critique the new document than what was already inadequate in the first case.

L-0016/007

Comments that were intended to improve readability (requests for more definitions, suggestions to make maps more useable, requesting improvements in cross-references & citations, etc), were generally brushed off- usually without response; sometimes rudely (and oddly-for example, in the case of figure 4.20 (now 4.25), I requested that the map and the legend be placed on opposite pages, for ease of reference, and not on the recto & verso of the same page. The commenter responded (brusquely) that the format had not changed, but it has- my suggestion was implemented. ...)

L-0016/008

Comments about bald statements of (quasi-) fact where there was really considerable disagreement were mostly responded to in general responses, since (unsurprisingly) I wasn't the only one to make those comments. Responses to these comments varied: some said that the new document contained more information on these subjects, including the uncertainties and assumptions involved. I'm going to have to take that on (dubious) faith, as I haven't had time to check. I'm hoping that terms like 'some' and 'many' and 'includes' have been replaced with numbers, and the uncertainties clearly marked

L-0016/009

Other comments which I voiced along with many others went essentially unanswered-a large # of my comments and questions were referred to page 3.289, which is a generic response saying, essentially: 'We read your comments, but we're not going to respond to them, or change anything'.

L-0016/012

I'd say between 1/3 and 1/2 of them [my 500+ comments] went essentially unanswered. Of those that were answered, only a very few promised corrections and elaborations. Whether these corrections and elaborations really were implemented, I can't say-I hadn't time to check. Otherwise, the common response was formulaic, to wit: "This comment does not change the assessment documented in the HSW EIS". This is not an answer. How would I know whether the comment does (or should) change the assessment? No reasoning is given, just the bald statement. The questions I asked seem to me important, and cannot be dismissed as 'details'.

L-0017/008

The USDOE has not allowed reasonable and sufficient time for the regulators and the public to review and digest this 3,000-page document. Given the enormity of these decisions and the ramifications for decades to come, this document requires thorough and thoughtful review. While technically following the required guidelines, refusal to extend the public comment period, despite many requests, demonstrates a lack of good faith in genuinely seeking meaningful outside comments. It is particularly arrogant because it disregards time needed by the Hanford Advisory Board to prepare advice at its June 5-6 meeting. It is not too late to remedy this. We strongly urge the USDOE, as a show of good faith, to extend the comment period an additional two weeks to June 10.

L-0017/009

Because of omissions and insufficient evaluations, particularly regarding cumulative impacts, we [Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility] recommend that this environmental impact statement be rejected and a new, more comprehensive EIS be drafted.

L-0028/002

The decision [to import radioactive waste to Hanford] is a violation of requirements Of the National

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Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

L-0039/001

The Hanford Advisory Board (Board) has reviewed the revised draft of the Hanford Solid Waste Environmental Impact Statement (HSW EIS). While this EIS contains significantly more detail than the original draft, the EIS is still insufficient in terms of scope and detail.

L-0041/004

However, the HSW-EIS still contains significant deficiencies in scope and detail – significant enough that we believe the document cannot support a Record of Decision.

L-0041/058

Conduct characterization and modeling studies and waste characterization and treatment studies of each individual site. The variability in the magnitude of release and the temporal distribution curves presented in Appendix L clearly demonstrate the wide range of uncertainty in the modeling results. These studies are necessary to develop model predictions that exhibit greater certainty.

L-0044/110

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has received and reviewed the Revised Draft Hanford Site Solid (Radioactive and Hazardous) Waste Program Environmental Impact Statement (Revised HSW-EIS).

We appreciate the work of the United States Department of Energy (USDOE) to develop a broader range of waste management alternatives, provide updated information and analysis, and address the many comments and suggestions from reviewers. We especially appreciate that the Revised HSW-EIS document provides more discussion of alternatives in the context of the important work needed to meet Hanford Site cleanup commitments.

We believe that the Preferred Alternative and its variations indicate that USDOE has been responsive to many of our concerns, public comment, and the productive work of the Cleanup Constraints and Challenges (C3H) process. Nonetheless, in several respects the draft continues to fall short of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.

E-0049/002, L-0048/002

The [Oregon Hanford Cleanup] Board has discussed the revised EIS and has serious concerns about the adequacy and thoroughness of the document.

L-0054/003

On May 13, 2003, the YN [Yakama Nation] requested a 60-day extension of the comment period to 26 July and a briefing on the alternatives and impacts to tribal resources. To date, USDOE has provided no response.

L-0054/013

Sixth, it fails to meet the letter or intent of existing environmental laws, including the Treaty of 1855, NEPA, RCRA, and CERCLA.

L-0054/016

In consideration of these facts, it is requested that USDOE withdraw this EIS, rescope the proposed actions to be considered in the analysis, and correct the major problems cited here.

L-0055/003

As such it is highly recommended that the schedule on completion of a final draft and record of decision on this action be reconsidered and that the Department of Energy develop additional drafts or sections of drafts until the entire analysis is acceptable to all parties involved.

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L-0055/004

First of all, although the CTUIR are grateful for the 15 day extension we received to review this report, it is sorrowfully inadequate for the volume of documentation required to be reviewed to fully represent the CTUIR's perspective. To review this document requires reviewing many other supporting documents. The long term ramifications of this project suggest that such conservative time frames are inadequate.

P-0032/001

I believe that the new EIS fails to adequately address the public's concerns.

P-0033/005

WE MUST HAVE MORE DEBATE TIME.

P-0046/001

I cannot believe you would limit comment to such a short time on such a major subject.

P-0047/003

The SWEIS has not addressed the concerns of intelligent citizens even close to adequately!

P-0050/002

Please extend the SWEIS comment period.

P-0050/003

We need a proper SWEIS.

P-0057/001

I am requesting you re-draft the EIS for Hanford Solid Waste (program).

P-0062/001

The new draft of the EIS still fails to address adequately concerns of the citizens of WA.

P-0089/001

Please do not close the opportunity for public comment on the Hanford site.

P-0097/001

Once again the EIS is inadequate.

P-0146/002

I am also concerned that the EIS (even the newest draft from April) doesn't really clearly and directly address the concerns of citizens and scientists.

P-0147/001

The documents do not tell people the truth about our problem.

THR-0001/003

I have to commend the Department of Energy today, under NEPA, they are here. They are actually having a public meeting. ... But the problem is, is that the state of Washington, the state of Oregon, the Hanford Advisory Board, Columbia Riverkeeper, Heart of America Northwest, ... The Umatilla Indian nation, sovereign nation, sovereign government, asked the Department of Energy for at least a 30 day extension. Why? Because they gave us a 3,000 page document and said, here, go look at it. ... NEPA says real clearly by the law you have to have adequate time to assimilate it, to do the work, to do the analysis, to engage the public, because it's their resource, and that's why NEPA, the federal law, says that. As far as I'm concerned, they are violating it. ... we want openness. We don't want secrecy. We want public involvement.

THR-0002/011

Finally, just the public involvement. Like Greg, you know, we are really concerned that this is -- the DOE did

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not grant an extension for the public to comment on this document, because there is so much to look at, so much to consider. And, you know, it really makes me suspicious, if DOE really wanted to hear our comments and make a decision based on these concerns that we are voicing tonight, they should give us the extra time necessary to revise -- to review this EIS.

THR-0004/001

We are disappointed at the refusal to extend the deadlines. ... We want the review to be deliberate and thorough, so we want to encourage the Department of Energy to rethink their decision to not extend the review period to allow a deliberate and thorough comment from the public, and to rethink that point.

THR-0004/007

Finally, the last one I am going to leave you with, is we are not convinced that this analysis is complete. And we believe that there is more work that can be done.

THR-0005/002

[I have three areas of concern] And the first one is public input. I feel strongly that 45 days no way is enough time to have a public comment. And it is not sufficient, and it is totally unacceptable.

THR-0006/002

I think also that we need more time to research this, and I think the Department of Energy needs to give us more time rather than the short amount of days that they said we have to have this, all the comments in by.

THR-0008/001

The citizens themselves should be able to read that. And to leave it to 45 days to go through 3,000 pages is a mockery. Virtually confirms that this is a political maneuver. It's being driven by something other than the needs of the people in this region, and the needs, this is all the people in the region, including Native Americans. So, my comment on the public process is that it's failed.

THR-0009/001

...there isn't enough time to assess this statement[.]

THR-0009/010

I find the statement [DEIS] unacceptable

THR-0010/006

And then they want to give us 45 days to study a 3,000 page document. And they don't want to give an extension.

THR-0012/001

I was sitting there doing a little division. You would have to read 130 pages a day of this 3,000 page document. That would then leave you 20 days for testimony. We are already past that.

THR-0012/002

They [DOE] set it up as impossible on purpose. They changed the rules and [did] not informed us, on purpose.

THR-0014/001

This time period for this, [public comment period for the SW EIS] is it an EIS? Yes, for the Environmental Impact Statement, is ludicrous, it should be I would imagine six months.

TLG-0002/001

We have requested an extension of the comment deadline. The Umatilla Tribe has requested an extension. Other entities have requested extensions. They have all been turned down. We believe that -- we're disappointed in this action by the Department of Energy. ... We believe the government exists to serve its citizens; and we believe that in this case, the Federal Government through the U.S. Department of Energy is

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not serving its citizens. We believe that they have instituted artificial deadlines and a false sense of urgency and believe that there is really no legitimate reason why we cannot have an extension. The extension that we've requested.

TLG-0004/001

And my first gripe is that the comment period for this EIS and the distribution of the revised EIS and notice of this meeting, I think was truly inadequate. And I think that without adequate comment, it makes a mockery of the NEPA process. And so I would certainly commend additional time for this purpose. And I would hope that the DOE would change its position on that.

TLG-0009/007

DOE officials also, for the first time since the tri-party agreement was signed, refused to grant a very reasonable request to extend the comment deadline.

TLG-0012/003

And an adequate notification period so that local people can familiarize themselves with this new document, along with the concerns that are raised by people who study these things.

TLG-0012/005

And I think, in the future, it would be really nice if, in fact, credibility and communication is a goal here, that we try to show people really what it is that we're proposing to ship through here [LaGrande].

TPO-0002/004

The first major comment is: public involvement. NEPA requires the adequate time for the public to read and assimilate the information written in any Environmental Impact Statement.

The USDOE has failed to grant a 30-day extension to the comment period, even though USDOE received requests from the state of Washington and Oregon and multiple public interest organizations and the Hanford Advisory Board.

The state of Washington asked for an extension to at least the -- have meeting in June.

USDOE has denied any extension, expecting the public and all reviewing agencies to adequately review the 3,000 page document in a very short period of time.

TPO-0003/002

To assume that everything's going to be fine without looking into all the probabilities and possibilities and planning for all the potential outcomes is unacceptable.

TPO-0006/004

And the first is that we are baffled by the DOE's refusal to offer an extension of the public comment period.

TPO-0012/001

We urge DOE to withdraw the EIS and come back out after it meets the test clearly laid out by the court and its own 1997 document [PEIS].

TPO-0015/001

But are you [DOE] listening? I made approximately a hundred phone calls over the last couple of days. People are discouraged, they're feeling hopeless, they don't feel heard.

TPO-0015/012

I appreciate that there's some improvements. I appreciate DOE going back and rewriting this thing. But I don't agree with all of the inadequacies and lax in this report.

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TPO-0017/001

And in the spirit of that democracy, I, too, am not happy that the comment period was not extended whenever the people asked for it, because we are the people. And this is not our day job. It's the Department of Energy, the Government's job, the people that are supposed to work for us.

TPO-0019/004

Due to the complexity and the seriousness of the topic at hand, I have also joined my colleagues in requesting a 15-day extension of the comment period. It is absolutely critical that the public has sufficient time to consider the important decisions associated with the actions of this document.

TRI-0001/002

We [Heart of America Northwest] are pleased that it was withdrawn last year and reissued. But we think that it is still legally inadequate.

TSE-0011/002

Now, the impression is also that of a certain amount of arrogance, and I think that these recent activities, such as not allowing an adequate amount of time for the analysis of this EIS, is part of it.

TSE-0013/006

So, I think this impact statement should be withdrawn, we should start over, and we should work with what we have there.

TSE-0016/001

I just want to voice my concern tonight about the public participation process. I am really disappointed and angered that DOE has not met any of the requests to extend the comment period. I don't think 45 days is sufficient time for anyone to analyze this document. I know that many of us in the audience here tonight are familiar with this topic, and we follow it pretty closely. But I also know that there are many new people in the audience tonight who are here because they are worried about the dangers at Hanford, and they are very concerned about the future of the region and the future of our river, and the impact that this will have on future generations. So, if you think that tonight is their first exposure to this topic, they now have 12 days left, after hearing these presentations, to try to generate some good, adequate comments. And I don't know how that can happen. So I just really want to reiterate my disappointment that DOE has not extended the comment period. And I think that their actions speak a thousand times louder than their words, considering what they think about public participation.

TSE-0022/003

This is a national nuclear waste dump and it's going to become much more of one when the DOE gets through, because you have heard tonight that they have foreshortened comment, and in fact the Hanford Advisory Board has said we want another two weeks to be able to comment, because we legally cannot comment. I am a member of that board. The DOE said, nah, forget it. So, look, the conversation at Hanford is over. Okay? They're not listening. None of the comments here tonight will be taken into account[.]

TSE-0023/003

I think we've definitely got to start all over on this EIS

TSE-0024/001

I think the EIS is unacceptable[.]

TSE-0024/002

I think the comment period is too short, and what does a couple of weeks mean in regards to the thousand year half-lives of the radionuclides.

TSE-0026/005

The EIS is an insult. It should be withdrawn. The DOE must be made to comply with state and federal

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environmental laws, no more exemptions.

TSE-0030/006

I am genuinely saddened by the growing and blatant disregard that the Department of Energy has for the public process.

TSE-0036/003

The public is being cut out of this. And you cannot say you are accelerating the cleanup for risk when you are cutting out the public, which is what's happening. Not even two weeks [for a comment period extension]?

TSP-0006/001

Public participation does work, someone has said. But does the DOE pay attention to the citizens' will and the citizens' input? I am not very optimistic about that.

TSP-0007/006

...the EIS is obviously not adequate[.]

TSP-0014/001

Now, explain to me why there isn't a Final EIS, and then public hearings to discuss the Final EIS? To me, that totally says that this meeting has no purpose whatsoever, because what we are saying might very well be inaccurate, and there is no way we can know. The point of this meeting should be to bring facts to the public so people can be informed and be able to give you the best information they have in response to that.

Response

NEPA procedures ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and before actions are taken. DOE considers public input a valuable and required step in the NEPA process. DOE solicited input from regulators, tribal nations and members of the public over a three-month comment period on the first draft HSW EIS, and over an extended sixty (60) day comment period on the revised draft HSW EIS. The HSW EIS incorporates accurate scientific analyses, expert comments from supporting agencies, and the results of public scrutiny provided during scoping and other public review periods. The resulting HSW EIS concentrates on issues that are truly significant to management of LLW, MLLW, and TRU waste at Hanford. The revised draft HSW EIS was presented for a public comment period of forty-five (45) days beginning April 11, 2003. In response to requests, the comment period was extended for an additional fifteen (15) days to June 11, 2003.

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DOE believes this HSW EIS complies with applicable NEPA requirements. See Volume I Sections 1.6 and 7, Volume II Appendices A and I, and the Volume III CRD introductory sections for further details on consultation and public involvement.

Comments

P-0074/001

It is long past time for the Department of Energy to begin to take seriously the concerns of citizens

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THR-0010/001

Every time I leave one of these meetings I leave here angry. I don't leave here satisfied. I leave here angry. I don't feel like my words, whatever they are, are listened to. I go to the next meeting, I don't hear any kind of resolution of any of the issues that I have heard anybody else express or myself express.

THR-0010/002

I mean, 12 years of going to Hanford meetings, just to battle, just to get the government to take away the waste that they have already created in the last 50 years of these programs, and they just keep putting it off with studies and they keep doing this and that.

THR-0011/001

I think that it's important for the new management at the Hanford Site to really remember that the public's been here for 14 years. And we've been involved in this process. And we've been meeting with them regularly, many of you, giving massive amounts of your time to attend public meetings. It's not the most fun thing to do. ... And I think one of the most disturbing points that they need to hear right now is that we are very alarmed at what appears to be them walking away from the public process that we have worked so hard to build, a good relationship with the cleanup agencies, offering constructive criticism with ideas that help to improve the actual cleanup at the site. And we have heard from those agencies, the cleanup agencies involved with the regulation, that that's what's made Hanford progress so outstanding in this country. That's why we've gotten so much done. And we really have gotten a lot of progress made.

THR-0011/005

And it's very important that they [DOE / Hanford site managers] listen to us. And I just urge them to please open your doors, open your ears, and listen to what we've got to say, because together we can clean it up. But trying to do it this way behind closed doors, to ignore groundwater issues, to ignore real cleanup will never work, and we will all pay.

THR-0020/001

I know that a lot of us are feeling really frustrated about this whole process, because we have all been here, what, ten times, 12 times. I can't even remember how many times I have been here making comments.

TLG-0010/001

I think that the whole process feels like something that's being shoved down our throats. And I think that's a problem, because we're not here just because we're worried about something little. We're here because we're concerned about generations beyond even our comprehension.

TPO-0016/005

Your comment's not going to make a difference. They're [DOE's] not listening, it won't be responded to in an honest way. The conversation is over, folks.

TPO-0021/001

The Department of Energy has never listened. If listening means action, then action means clean up.

TSE-0030/002

We have heard a lot in recent months about DOE's accelerated cleanup plan. And it seems to me that this is all about acceleration, and very little about any actual cleanup. The rush to get this EIS through I think is a perfect example of that. Despite numerous requests from a number of organizations, just in the comment period, Department of Energy's refused. It's particularly disturbing that DOE would refuse the comment period, even for the Hanford Advisory Board. I think it is a very ominous sign. In fact, it seems to me that DOE's accelerated cleanup plan for Hanford is actually about accelerated cleanup at the smaller sites, at Hanford's expense.

Response

NEPA procedures ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before

Public Involvement

decisions are made and before actions are taken. DOE considers public input a valuable and required step in the NEPA process. DOE solicited input from regulators, tribal nations and members of the public over a three-month comment period on the first draft HSW EIS, and over an extended sixty (60) day comment period on the revised draft HSW EIS. The HSW EIS incorporates accurate scientific analyses, expert comments from supporting agencies, and the results of public scrutiny provided during scoping and other public review periods. The resulting HSW EIS concentrates on issues that are truly significant to management of LLW, MLLW, and TRU waste at Hanford. The revised draft HSW EIS was presented for a public comment period of forty-five (45) days beginning April 11, 2003. In response to requests, the comment period was extended for an additional fifteen (15) days to June 11, 2003.

Both oral and written comments were received at public meetings. Written comments were also accepted by conventional and electronic mail. Comments were provided on several common topics including: coordination with other environmental impact statements and DOE activities; alternatives and activities to analyze; waste types and volumes to analyze; public health, environmental consequences; transportation risk, and public involvement and government agency consultation. DOE has carefully considered and made an extensive effort to respond to comments and incorporate revisions in the final HSW EIS. It must be noted that many of the actions evaluated will be subject to additional and more specific regulatory and public reviews pursuant to the dangerous waste permitting process and the TPA.

DOE believes this HSW EIS complies with applicable NEPA requirements. See Volume I Sections 1.6 and 7, Volume II Appendices A and I, and the Volume III CRD introductory sections for further details on consultation and public involvement.

DOE is committed to cleaning up the Hanford Site in accordance with the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) and applicable environmental requirements under federal and state laws and regulations. As of February 1, 2003, DOE had met 99% of its TPA milestones on or ahead of schedule. A lot in the way of cleanup has happened at Hanford over the last decade. Portions of the site have already been cleaned up, removed from the National Priority List (NPL), and released for other uses (e.g., the 1100 Operable Unit). As part of the river corridor cleanup, DOE is remediating contaminated soil sites, decommissioning the plutonium production reactors and associated facilities, removing production reactor fuel from the K Basins to interim storage in the 200 Area, and treating groundwater contaminated by past operations. Groundwater contamination beneath the Hanford Site is being studied and remediated by the ongoing CERCLA program in accordance with the Tri-Party Agreement. See Volume II Appendix N, Section N.2.4. See Volume III Section 2.0, Item 6 of the CRD for more examples of cleanup at Hanford.

DOE is responsible for the cleanup of dozens of sites around the country. DOE's approach is to consolidate and dispose of radioactive waste from all its cleanup efforts in the safest and most cost-effective manner possible. Hanford and other sites would be available for the disposal of low-level waste and mixed low-level waste; WIPP is used for the disposal of TRU waste; Yucca Mountain is expected to be used for the disposal of high-level waste and spent nuclear fuel. Many more curies of waste will be sent offsite from Hanford than will be received from offsite. Analysis indicates that these wastes could be handled without complicating future remediations, or diverting resources or disposal capacity from other Hanford cleanup activities.

The Hanford clean-up effort is expected to be completed in 2035, followed by a long-term stewardship program that ensures waste remaining onsite is appropriately managed.

Comments

TLG-0009/005

This hearing process, I wrote in February, should not be a sham exercise undertaken solely to fulfill the letter of the law. But DOE officials are still acting as though this decision was reached long before the public hearing process was reopened.

Public Involvement

TPO-0013/005

The repeated failure of the DOE to fulfill its past promises and commitments calls into serious question not just the proposal presented today but the integrity of the entire process of government in this area. DOE, your proposals leave me with many unanswered questions. What are your true intentions? Are you negotiating in good faith? Have you fully disclosed all the relevant information in your possession?

Response

NEPA procedures ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and before actions are taken. DOE considers public input a valuable and required step in the NEPA process. DOE solicited input from regulators, tribal nations and members of the public over a three-month comment period on the first draft HSW EIS, and over an extended sixty (60) day comment period on the revised draft HSW EIS. The HSW EIS incorporates accurate scientific analyses, expert comments from supporting agencies, and the results of public scrutiny provided during scoping and other public review periods. The resulting HSW EIS concentrates on issues that are truly significant to management of LLW, MLLW, and TRU waste at Hanford. The revised draft HSW EIS was presented for a public comment period of forty-five (45) days beginning April 11, 2003. In response to requests, the comment period was extended for an additional fifteen (15) days to June 11, 2003.

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DOE believes this HSW EIS complies with applicable NEPA requirements. See Volume I Sections 1.6 and 7, Volume II Appendices A and I, and the Volume III CRD introductory sections for further details on consultation and public involvement.

DOE reaches its conclusions after full public involvement and disclosure. These decisions, often in the form of Records of Decision or RODs, are then published in the Federal Register.

Comments

E-0043/011, EM-0217/011, EM-0218/011, L-0056/011, LM-0017/011, LM-0018/011

The HSW EIS is not compliant with NEPA because it exceeds the scope of the EIS established in the scoping period. 40 CFR 5 1502.7(a)(2) and 1508.25. The volume of off-site waste is greater in the draft EIS than in the scoping period.

Response

The NEPA process encourages use of public comments received during scoping to revise the scope of the EIS. DOE has revised the scope of the HSW EIS based on comments received during the public comment periods for the drafts.